

## CLAIMS

1           1.       A method of load balancing messages to servers of a server farm, by a load  
2 balancer, comprising:

3                 configuring the load balancer with information on the session ID values which may be  
4 assigned by at least one of the servers;

5                 determining, by the load balancer, for at least some client messages including a non-  
6 empty session ID field, which server or sub-group of servers is associated with the ID in the  
7 ID field, responsive to the configured information; and

8                 selecting, by the load balancer, a server to receive each of the at least some client  
9 messages, at least partially responsive to the determination.

1           2.       A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises managing a table which lists for at least one of the servers or sub-groups of servers  
3 a range of values from which the server may assign session IDs.

1           3.       A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises managing a table which lists for at least one of the servers or sub-groups of servers,  
3 one or more values of a sub-set of the bits of session IDs associated with the server.

1           4.       A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises providing a function which correlates between session IDs and the server which  
3 assigned the session ID.

1           5.       A method according to claim 1, comprising configuring at least one of the  
2 servers with a rule on the session ID values it may assign to sessions.

1           6.       A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises configuring through a user interface, which configures both the load balancer and at  
3 least one of the servers responsive to user instructions.

1           7.       A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises configuring automatically by a module running on the load balancer, which  
3 transmits configuration instructions to at least one of the servers.

1           8.       A method according to claim 7, wherein configuring automatically by the load  
2 balancer comprises configuring responsive to input received from the at least one of the  
3 servers.

1           9.     A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring at least one of the servers  
2 comprises configuring substantially all the servers in the farm with respective sub-groups of  
3 allowed session IDs which do not include common session IDs.

1           10.    A method according to claim 9, wherein at least some of a plurality of available  
2 session IDs are not assigned to any of the servers.

1           11.    A method according to claim 9, wherein configuring substantially all the  
2 servers comprises assigning substantially a same number of session IDs to each of the servers.

1           12.    A method according to claim 9, wherein configuring substantially all the  
2 servers comprises assigning different numbers of session IDs to at least two of the servers.

1           13.    A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer  
2 comprises configuring by a system manager.

1           14.    A method according to claim 1, wherein selecting a server to receive a client  
2 message comprises selecting a server which assigned the session ID of the message.

1           15.    A method according to claim 1, wherein selecting a server to receive a client  
2 message comprises selecting a server in a sub-group of servers which shares information with  
3 a server which assigned the session ID of the message.

1           16.    A method according to claim 1, wherein the client messages comprise SSL  
2 client messages.

1           17.    A method according to claim 1, wherein the session ID values comprise  
2 application layer ID values.

1           18.    A method according to claim 1, additionally comprising managing a list of ID  
2 values actually assigned by one or more servers and determining, by the load balancer, for at  
3 least some client messages including a non-empty session ID field, which server or sub-group  
4 of servers is associated with the ID in the ID field, responsive to the managed list.

1           19.    A load balancer, comprising:  
2           a memory unit adapted to store configured information on session ID values which  
3 may be assigned by at least one of the servers;  
4           an input interface adapted to receive client messages; and

5           a load balancing unit which is adapted to select a server to receive at least one of the  
6 client messages, at least partially responsive to the contents of the memory unit, and to  
7 forward the at least one of the client messages to the selected server.

1           20.    A load balancer according to claim 19, comprising a configuration module  
2 adapted to store the configured information in the memory unit.

1           21.    A load balancer according to claim 20, wherein the configuration module is  
2 adapted to generate instructions directed to one or more servers on the session ID values they  
3 may use.

1           22.    A load balancer according to claim 19, wherein the load balancing unit  
2 comprises a comparator adapted to compare at least a portion of at least one of the fields of  
3 received client messages to information stored in the memory unit.